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ALL 1949

MEMORANDUM FOR: ASSISTANT DIRECTOR FOR POLICY COORDINATION

SUBJECT: Greek Knowledge of Albanian Operation

1. On the evening of 3 August 1949 a well-placed contact in the Greek General Staff informed our Athens representative that the Greeks had intercepted a letter from an Albanian political leader in Italy addressed to an Albanian in Greece and containing information regarding alleged plans for the overthrow of the present Albanian Government.

2. The letter in question is said to have contained the following points:

- a. There has been formed in Italy an Albanian political committee designed to assure the common effort of all Albanian parties in effecting the liberation of Albania.
- b. The Balli Kombetar and the Legalitet parties have united. The Kosovar group is not participating so as to be better camouflaged. The BKI is not taking part.
- c. The Central Committee includes Midhat Frasheri as chairman as well as a certain Vasi (described as a Zogist tribal chieftain from central Albania) and Ndue Gjoni (described as a Catholic chieftain of northern Albania).
- d. The Allies have decided to operate from the Yugoslav side, where Kryeziu, with Tito's help, has already organized an impressive force.
- e. Plans call for the seat of the Committee to be transferred to Kosovo, where 15,000 Albanians are to revolt. At that time the Kryeziu forces are to invade northern Albania, after which uprisings will occur in central Albania under Vasi and in southern Albania under Midhat Frasheri. The two latter uprisings are to eliminate the influence of Kryeziu and Tito control. Afterward a provisional Government is to be formed and a plebiscite held.
- f. Ismail Verlaci is not included in the above plans. The entire movement is being guided by the British through an Albanian in Rome named "Seit".

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OSO Comment: At first sight, and on the basis of internal evidence, the letter described in para. 2 above would appear to be genuine, with the strong possibility that it was sent to a member of the BKK in Greece by someone close to the BKK leadership in Rome. In this connection your attention is invited to our memorandum dated 4 August 1949 (CIA Control Number 33129-m), subject: BKK Views on Balli Kombetar Activities. However, in view of the facts that paras. 2 a. and 2 b. contain only information of a general nature, that the membership of the Central Committee as described in para. 2 c. is apparently inaccurate (not to mention the seeming confusion of Marka Gjoni with his son Nedze), and that emphasis is placed on alleged Yugoslav participation in this venture, we do not exclude the possibility that this "letter" (of which neither the writer nor the addressee has been identified to us) was concocted by the Greek General Staff, on the basis of incomplete and inaccurate information and of their own fears of an Allied rapprochement with Yugoslavia to the possible prejudice of Greek interests.

3. Also on 3 August 1949 [] was informed by the same contact in the Greek General Staff that the British are establishing a strong base on the island of Corfu under the command of a Major Wilkerson, located at Villa Bebeli. His staff is to have 32 British intelligence officers and "large groups" of Albanian operators. The cover for this base is to be the alleged operation of an observation or weather station. The entire operation is said to be under the direction of Brigadier General Forest Walker, who is reported to be stationed at Palermo and to travel in his own yacht.

4. The Greek General Staff contact in question said that the Italians were much dissatisfied with the British. He also said that, according to secret sources of information available to the General Staff, the Italians actually desire to take over northern Albania while the Greeks take southern Albania.

5. Inasmuch as the contents of paras. 1 and 2 above is of definite interest to us in evaluating this Greek General Staff contact, and since the information contained in para. 3 above is of considerable operational interest to us, we shall much appreciate the benefit of any comments which you may be in a position to make.

[]
Assistant Director
Special Operations

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